

SpillAlert

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE SPILL INDUSTRY

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PRODUCED BY

UKSpill
ASSOCIATION

RESPONSE & RESPONDERS

How the world has changed. The future of spill response will still need expertise and good management.



This cover page is a list of Responders accredited by UKSpill under the UKSpill Accreditation Scheme.


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INDUSTRY EVENTS: PREVIEW



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The views and opinions expressed by the authors and those providing comments are theirs alone, and do not necessarily reflect the views of UKSpill.

Welcome

Deciding to take Response and Responders as the theme for this issue was inevitable, as it is at the core of the spill industry, however, the subject(s) is almost impossible to cover, and undoubtedly would justify a book. The simplicity of the title belies a myriad of sub topics, googling, as we all do, immediately throws out a list of related items covering plans, organisation, jobs, companies, training, contractors, kit, equipment and, to my relief, conferences, well IOSC, Spillcon and Interspill have made an impact in the google world!

This issue is not going to become a book, but as Response and Responders are a very human aspect of oil spills, obviously supported by equipment, this issue will focus on the people who have for decades been at the forefront of Response and Responding around the globe, and not just in the UK. It will be about their views on where we started, where we have got to,

what has changed in terms of the types of spill, the equipment that is used, and what we will need in the future.

The news of another spill in the North Sea, and the immediate attention it generates, needs to be put in context by the silent partner in spills, the inland spill, almost all of which are small but at a vastly higher frequency. The difference between a spill at the bottom of someone's garden, and in a subsea well on the bottom of the ocean is enormous, but both have much in common, a contaminated garden can destroy the houseowner's value, and quality of life, just as bad as the impact of Macondo on whole communities in the Gulf of Mexico.

So whilst we will discuss primarily the marine spill in terms of response and responders in this issue, how we deal with inland spills will be subject of a future issue.

Letters to the editor

The Raw Report, Spill Alert Issue 6, May 2011 – Comments

"There are a certain number of errors and loose interpretations in this article which we feel need to be corrected.

The article starts by referring to the Environment Agency guidance document "Oil clean up products and their application" and then immediately mis-quotes. Firstly, note that the EA consistently uses the term 'sorbent' and not 'adsorbent' to avoid confusion when referring to the definitions for ABSorbents and ADSorbents. See BS7959 part 1 for definitions, and also the BSIF "Guidance on Selection for use of Sorbents" endorsed by the EA.

Having defined the difference, the RAW writer then describes polypropylene pads as having the advantage of being hydrophobic and oleophilic (rejecting water and attracting oil). This however is the main property of practically ALL oil selective sorbents, not just polypropylene, making this statement rather pointless if not misleading. It needs to be pointed out that ABSorbents do the same, but actually more efficiently and also in that they properly retain the oil even when squeezed, whilst adsorbents such as polypropylene actually release the oil if squeezed and also do take in some water. This is a major inconvenience when actually trying to recover oil from the surface of water, and it becomes rather labour intensive and inefficient. In fast flowing streams, even if boomed to reduce the flow rate, the use of polypropylene is not particularly effective. Especially for light fuel spills, such as petrol or diesel, a true ABSorbent is much more efficient and cost effective. Absorbents are far superior for spills on water.

Absorbents can also be used to filter oily water, to remove a sheen of hydrocarbons, and this is especially effective with lighter products such as petrol and diesel, an application where polypropylene and most adsorbents are simply not suitable. Absorbents are also excellent for cleaning up volatile and toxic products such as BTEX and for these products should be the first choice sorbent, as indicated clearly in the "Guidance on Selection for use" document referred to above. Whilst polypropylene and other adsorbents are just fine for many applications, the range of possibilities for ABSorbents should not be ignored."

Barrie Dannenberg, IAC Ltd

www.iacuk.com

A response from RAW

"I would like to thank Mr Dannenberg for the comments and I accept some of the criticisms levelled in respect of loose interpretation, however, I would just like to confirm that I have not mis-quoted the Environment Agency's guidance document on Oil Spill Products ("Oil clean-up products and their application", Environment Agency, 2010), but may have incorrectly suggested that the document only provides guidance on 'absorbents' whereas it does in fact provide guidance on both absorbents and adsorbents, referring to them collectively as "sorbents". The guidance makes this reference clear within the body of the document which is quoted below and the only quote used within the article itself was taken verbatim from this section of the document.

"Sorbents – adsorbents and absorbents exist on the UK market. They draw the oil off the surface and retain it so it can be physically removed. They work by mechanical or chemical means, such as adhesion and capillary action. Some allow the oil to be recovered out of the sorbents after use. Some 'lock' the oil into their chemical composition so that it can't leach out. Both types have their strengths and you should identify the best product to use depending on the situation."

The article should perhaps have best been titled "Sorbents – Part of the First Line of Response in Dealing with Oil Spills".

I also accept that absorbents other than polypropylene exist on the market that may be just as effective and it was not my intention to promote or denigrate particular products as I try to remain as independent as possible when drafting the RAW Report.

Hopefully readers found the article as a whole of use in bringing attention to the Environment Agency guidance on oil spill products and other relevant guidance in relation to the use of sorbents."

Dr. Jon Burton BSc PhD FGS MCIWEM CSci
Technical Director, RAW

The main feature:

RESPONSE & RESPONDERS

TO ILLUSTRATE THE CONTEXT FOR OIL SPILL RESPONSE & RESPONDERS, AN EXTRACT FROM SHELL'S SUSTAINABILITY REPORT FOR 2010

2010 IN REVIEW

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3.3 MILLION BARRELS
OF OIL EQUIVALENT

SPILLS - Shell has clear requirements and procedures to prevent spills, and multi-billion dollar programmes under way to maintain and improve our facilities and pipelines. However, spills still occur for reasons such as operational failure, accidents or corrosion.

In 2010, our operational spills of oil and oil products totalled 2.9 thousand tonnes, up from 1.4 thousand tonnes in 2009. About 35% of this volume was from a single spill at the Montreal East Refinery in Canada. We continue to learn from such spills to improve our performance.

SPILLS - OPERATIONAL AND SABOTAGE [E] The number of operational spills was down significantly to 193 in 2010, from 275 in 2009, continuing the improvement trend of recent years. This was in part due to our continued investment in improving the reliability and maintenance of our facilities.

In 2010, sabotage and theft in Nigeria remained a significant cause of spills, totalling 3.0 thousand tonnes. This was a decrease in volume from recent years. However, the number of these spills increased from 95 in 2009 to 112 in 2010.

The main feature:



ITOPF* offer a classic definition of what response to a marine oil spill involves

*International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation

Aerial reconnaissance is an essential element of effective response to marine oil spills. It is used for assessing the location and extent of oil contamination and verifying predictions of the movement and fate of oil slicks at sea. Aerial surveillance provides information facilitating deployment and control of operations at sea, protection of sites along threatened coastlines and the preparation of resources for shoreline clean-up. Observation can be undertaken visually or by use of remote sensing systems.

Initial clean up responses to a spill at sea are often based upon the use of dispersant chemicals or the containment and recovery of oil using booms and skimmers. Whilst these techniques can be of use in the right circumstances, there are many difficulties associated with employing them effectively.

The type of oil and concerns over potential impacts of dispersed oil can preclude dispersant use. For example, they are not

effective against many commonly transported oils which have a high viscosity, and soon become ineffective against lighter oils because natural weathering processes or the formation of water-in-oil emulsions greatly increases oil viscosity, often very quickly (a few hours to one to two days). The application of dispersant to treat large quantities of spilled oil also requires specialised equipment and extensive logistical support. Containment and recovery is limited by sea conditions and the relatively small oil encounter rate which the available systems can achieve.

Because of the logistical difficulties of picking up oil from the sea surface and storing it prior to final disposal on land, an alternative approach involves concentrating the oil in special fireproof booms and setting it alight. In practice, this technique is unlikely to be viable in most ship-source spills due to the difficulty of collecting and maintaining sufficient thickness of oil to burn.

Together, these factors usually mean that only a small fraction of a major spill can be dealt with at sea, and it is almost inevitable that oil will threaten coastal resources. Protective strategies are seldom employed to the extent possible and it will usually be necessary to mount a shoreline response operation. Priorities for protection and clean-up will need to be agreed and care must be taken to ensure that the techniques selected do not do more damage than the oil alone. The application of oil-degrading bacteria and nutrients to contaminated shorelines to enhance the process of natural degradation has generated considerable interest for more than two decades. However, it has so far not been demonstrated to be technologically feasible or beneficial for large-scale restoration projects. The disposal of oil and debris may become a major problem both during and after a clean-up operation.

www.itopf.com

The main feature:

A MANUFACTURERS AGENTS' VIEW ON RESPONDERS

First reflections are that Responders, like all heavy/traditional industries, are resistant to change, not very receptive to new ideas and pieces of equipment.

They are convinced they know best and have all the right equipment. It is very hard to present something new to them, have them really listen and to get them to try out a piece of equipment. For example, the Salarollump – a lot of Response companies look briefly and say they have plenty of bigger pumps that will do the job. They completely miss the point: I recently visited a responder who illustrates this by being the exception, having used it he said everything else they had tried simply would not do the job, the Salarollump was

great. What we need is a forum within UKSpill to be able to present new equipment and ideas to Responders specifically, and possibly have agreement to get a trial within that group and a report. There was a presentation by Ayles Fernie, when we went to the IMO for the 2010 UKSpill Marine Seminar, who underlined the difficulty in getting support from users to get his product off the ground, and how essential this support was.

Barrie Dannenburg, IAC

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The main feature:

The Effective use of Volunteers in Oil Spill Response

ITOPF provides objective technical advice and information on all aspects of pollution response and the effects of spills on the marine environment. Technical services include on-site clean-up advice, pollution damage assessment, assistance in spill response planning, and the provision of training and information.

ITOPF's small team of technical staff are in constant readiness to respond to ship-source spills anywhere in the world. The role of the technical staff at the site of a spill will vary according to the circumstances, but normally includes one or more of the following activities:

- Advising all parties on the potential fate and effects of the pollutant.
- Advising and assisting all parties on the most appropriate clean-up response, with the aim of mitigating any damage.
- Helping to secure equipment and assist in organising the clean-up in cases where the shipowner is required to mount the response operation.
- Monitoring the clean-up, in order to provide subsequent reports of events and of the technical merit of the actions taken.
- Investigating any damage to coastal resources such as fisheries, mariculture, industry and recreational areas.

From this involvement at over 650 incidents,

ITOPF staff have noted that a difficult challenge in managing spill response can be the effective utilisation of volunteers. In a major spill the coverage, by newspapers, television, the internet and social media, can often generate a large turn-out of volunteers. While this is a potentially valuable and flexible workforce, who may also bring benefits in terms of local knowledge, engendering the trust of local communities and generally boosting public relations, there are a number of issues to be considered to manage this influx of willing helpers.

It is important to recognise that volunteer participation in clean-up operations is not cost-free. Although volunteer labour is offered free of charge per se, their productivity, responsiveness to instruction and period of involvement are unlikely to result in their overall cost-effectiveness matching that of the paid workforce. Each volunteer will require some level of personal protective equipment (PPE), food, transport to the clean-up site as well as competent supervision. In significant incidents, large numbers of volunteers may arrive from beyond the local area, requiring accommodation and other assistance.

Allocating appropriate types of work to volunteers and how best to supervise that work are also essential management decisions. Volunteers come from all walks of life and may or may not have skills which can be easily utilised in clean-up operations. They need to be physically fit and once on site, trained to a minimum standard and made aware of safety issues associated with working on the shoreline. One way to address this is to ensure that volunteers register on a daily basis

at which time safety briefings can be given, PPE issued and work details allocated. In general, it is preferable that volunteers are used in the secondary stages of clean-up, once bulk oil removal has been completed by professional responders.

Volunteers are often directed to assist with wildlife rehabilitation. In some cases this may be a viable option, but as the techniques for cleaning and rehabilitation of wildlife become ever more sophisticated, the number of unskilled volunteers that can be accommodated in this activity may be limited. Volunteers may be more effectively employed in roles which support the animal husbandry work, such as food preparation or construction and maintenance of pens or cages.

Local fishermen and vessel operators may also volunteer their services in a bid to assist with protection of sensitive resources, for example in return for fuel necessary to undertake the work. Their involvement should be coordinated with any wider at-sea response.

As a consequence of these concerns, it is important that the use of volunteers is considered and included in contingency plans, both at the national and local level. Regular exercising of contingency plans by teams that can be expected to manage a response, will allow the use of volunteers to be used constructively, to augment existing response capability.

This article is abridged from a new set of ITOPF Technical Information Papers (TIPs) that will be available later this year. Please see www.itopf.com for further details.

RESPONDING THEN AND NOW and lessons on the way

Images of Royal Navy Buccaneers bombing the grounded tanker Torrey Canyon and RAF Hunters dropping napalm to burn the spilled oil remain vividly in my mind.

This was the world's first major spill and as a young naval officer I played a tiny part, flying crews and equipment around the area. I thought no more about spills until I joined the North Sea oil industry, dragging my family from sublime Cornwall to the Granite City of Aberdeen. I was charged with implementing the oil spill contingency plan for the UK's first inshore oilfield, Beatrice in the Moray Firth and the Nigg Oil Terminal in the environmentally sensitive Cromarty Firth.

Having no experience, I relied on pioneers like the late Don Newman and Ian Macbeth of the Hydraulics Research Institute, Wallingford, whose 1973 paper "Oil Booms at a Tidal Inlet" is still the bible on booming. Later Mike Webb and Ian Macbeth, by then with Vikoma, taught me about the construction and limitations of booms. Ro-Clean engineers can still remember the work of quality expert John van Muilwijk, who taught me about rubber product design and manufacture as we tested and later helped develop the Ro-Boom.

I learned much from Warren Spring Laboratory (WSL), a leader in dispersant technology, fate of oil and shoreline cleanup. I talked to environmental scientists like Jenny Baker, Paul Kingston and staff at the Oil Pollution Research Unit (OPRU), who brought commonsense to spill response and post spill recovery, in place of hysteria whipped up by journalists and pressure groups. These people were world leaders in their fields.

BP was also a leader. Through its grandly named Environmental Control Centre it established Vikoma and its Sunbury Research Centre spawned many of the early Vikoma products. In 1980 it established the Oil Spill Service Centre (OSSC), now Oil Spill Response (OSR) as a world centre of excellence. It was my great privilege to lead OSSC through

the five exciting years post Exxon Valdez, at which OSSC, under Brent Pyburn, had been the first responder to arrive from outside the State of Alaska.

The Marine Pollution Control Unit (MPCU) was established to direct the UK response to spills, with a powerful head in Admiral Michael Stacey. He was supported by Chief Scientific Adviser Doug Cormack, previously Head of the Marine Pollution Division, WSL. Under MPCU, spill management, operator experience and expertise were developed at the major spills from the tankers Braer and Sea Empress and many smaller ones. The introduction of the Secretary of State's Representative (SOSREP) following Lord Donaldson's report was an excellent innovation in ensuring proper command and control and has proved its worth, particularly in the Napoli incident.

But as John Holmes observed in his recent editorial, our national expertise is dissipating. MPCU became a small part of the MCA; coastguard stations are closing; emergency towing vessels are going – get ready for the next Braer or Napoli. Port plans have been characterised by such low price contracts that one wonders how their requirements can be fulfilled. Scientific research is at a virtual standstill. Even EU rules prevent the MCA from having standby contracts with responders.

Of course those who participated in the tragic Macondo incident will have gained good practical experience. But how 47,000 personnel and 5000 boats achieved so little, I will never understand, although film of a Hercules spraying open water and emulsions gives a clue.

The value of well trained and experienced staff has been shown in all the spills I've attended. During the response to the Sea Empress spill, Milford Haven Port had regularly trained with local industries and agencies contributing hugely to the success of the response management. We visiting firemen were easily assimilated into a well trained functioning team.

Operator experience and skill can also greatly improve equipment performance. One of my mantras is that poor operators cannot make good equipment work, but good

operators can make poor equipment work. Roy Tatner the OSSC Senior Technician at the Mega Borg spill allowed the Vikoma Weir Boom to fill with a thick layer of oil before turning on the pumps. He turned them off when the majority of oil had been recovered with very low water content; unusual for a weir skimmer and very different from results achieved in tank testing.

At the Toledo grounding off Falmouth, OSSC borrowed a pump from a third party to offload fuel. When the pump seized, Tim Endean stripped and repaired it onboard, proving the value of marine engineers in the response team and demonstrating the need to ensure equipment is regularly maintained.

At the Sea Empress spill, a Briggs crew from the Fasgadair collected the oil from the protection boom at Tenby and towed it out to the ship some miles away without losing a drop. I have never seen it done better. But the Fasgadair has gone and the skilled skipper and crew with it.

Innovative thinking is also needed. On a South Wales beach, a trained oil industry engineer, who had never been a beachmaster at a spill, realised that he could use a stream flowing through the beach to flush oil into a collecting boom in the water. It was hugely successful.

Up-to-date contingency plans, well co-ordinated management response, regular training and exercises, well maintained stockpiles, research and development of equipment and techniques, smart logistics and skilled operational personnel are key constituents of response success, but are we living up to these requirements?

The Macondo response showed that politicians, broadcasters, print media and now the public acting as citizen journalists with blogs, Facebook and Twitter will savage us if we fail to meet their expectations and probably even if we do.

If the UK becomes complacent since there has been no major tanker spill or offshore accident for many years or if we think we can reduce our national capability because of financial constraints, we do so at our peril.

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In the News

INTERNATIONAL: DEEPWATER HORIZON POSTSCRIPTS

The hunt for new equipment to respond to future spills, the Shell-X prize for oil spill equipment. Shell-XPrize-innovation in oil spill clean up 8/3/2011.

Shell is participating as a sponsor and a judge in the Wendy Schmidt Oil Cleanup X CHALLENGE, a \$1.4 million competition designed to inspire a new generation of innovative solutions for oil spill cleanup technology. Specifically:

Peter Velez, global emergency response manager at Shell International Exploration and Production, is the industry judge on the panel, which comprises officials from the USCG, MSRC, BOEMRE, among others.

Shell is paying for the technological components of the competition. Shell will also help bring the winning technologies to market with other industry leaders.

Shell's participation came about after last year's Deepwater Horizon incident to help differentiate Shell from its competitors and position the company as an industry leader and supporter of innovation and technological advancements in oil spill response equipment.

Ten finalist teams have been chosen to test their equipment this summer at the National



Oil Spill Response Research & Renewable Energy Test Facility (OHMSETT) in New Jersey, the largest outdoor saltwater wave/tow tank facility in North America. Winners will be announced in October.

Two of the teams are from Norway, two are from Finland (Lamor is a member of UKSpill), one is from the Netherlands, and five are from the United States (California/Nevada, Illinois, Washington state, Florida). All teams except for one (Vor-Tek from California/Nevada) already work with the industry to provide oil spill response equipment.

The \$1.4 million Wendy Schmidt Oil Cleanup X CHALLENGE is a competition designed to inspire a new generation of innovative solutions that will speed the pace of cleaning up seawater surface oil resulting from spillage from ocean platforms, tankers, and other sources. It is a one-year competition with head-to-head competitive demonstrations

taking place at the OHMSETT Test Facility in Leonardo, N.J., USA (www.ohmsett.com). A \$1 million prize will be awarded to the team that demonstrates the ability to recover oil on the sea surface at the highest oil recovery rate (ORR) and the highest Oil Recovery Efficiency (ORE). For more information,

"To be selected as one of the top ten finalists is truly an honour for us. We continuously strive to find the most innovative and effective oil cleanup equipment and solutions that can operate in all climatic conditions. The Wendy Schmidt Oil Cleanup X CHALLENGE is an excellent platform and catalyst to spur innovations in research and development programs for oil spill recovery operations. No matter who ultimately wins this challenge, again I must say that I am honored on behalf of Lamor. That said, we are now committed in pursuing this challenge and winning too," says Fred Larsen, CEO, Lamor Corporation.

INTERNATIONAL: ICE AND OIL SPILLS POSTSCRIPTS

Coast Guard: Arctic response capability lacking By DAN JOLING, Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard said Friday the nation must decide what level of pollution cleanup response capability the agency should have along the Arctic coast as an oil company prepares to begin drilling there.

Papp spoke in Anchorage to a group that would welcome additional agency assets in the state that has more coastline than the rest of the nation combined. "With an ageing fleet of cutters and aircraft, the service is in the

middle of a major and expensive recapitalisation effort," he said. While - Congress is looking to make major spending cuts, Begich said, the Coast Guard is being asked to take on new responsibilities as melting sea ice opens the Arctic to resource development, shipping and tourism.

Shell Oil has applied to drill exploratory wells next year in the Beaufort Sea off Alaska's northern coast and the Chukchi Sea off its northwestern coast.

The company's spill response plans includes more than a dozen vessels accompanying the drilling ship, a second drilling ship to relieve pressure in a blowout well, and an oil spill containment system that could cap a blowout.

The agency is reviewing Shell's plans and is "fairly confident and comfortable" that the company will provide the right resources. But, "prudence dictates that we also acquire an appropriate level of Arctic pollution response capability."

In the News

UK: GANNET ALPHA OFFSHORE OIL LEAK

Shell U.K. Limited confirms the oil leak in a flowline to our Gannet Alpha platform is under control. The subsea well was shut in on Wednesday and the flowline on the seabed is now isolated and depressurised. Leakage of oil has been considerably reduced.

Shell takes all spills seriously, regardless of size and we have responded promptly to this incident. The size of the sea surface affected is estimated to be some 31 kms by 4.3 kms at its widest point and the sheen is currently moving west from the field. Our current expectation is

it will be naturally dispersed through wave action and will not reach shore. The weather currently is southerly winds of 25 to 30 knots and the sea state is some 2 metre waves.

We have deployed a Remote-Operated Vehicle (ROV) to do inspection checks and monitor the subsea leak which is on a flow line on the seabed. The relevant authorities (MCA, DECC, HSE) continue to be kept informed. A stand-by vessel remains on station with oil spill response equipment and dispersant if required.

Personnel on the platform are safe and the platform continues to operate. The Gannet field is in the Central North Sea around 112 miles (180km) east of Aberdeen. It is operated by Shell U.K. Limited on behalf of itself and Esso Exploration and Production UK Limited.

UK: EMERGENCY SPILL RESPONSE EQUIPMENT SUCCESSFULLY TESTED IN UK, SAYS OSPRAG

The Oil Spill Prevention and Response Advisory Group (OSPRAG) said that the UK oil and gas industry has successfully tested its ability to deploy a well capping device in the waters west of Shetland as part of an effort to further strengthen its emergency response capabilities.

The emergency equipment response deployment exercise aimed at simulating the logistical process of transporting a well capping device, loading it on to a vessel and lowering it over the side before fixing it to a specially-built simulated well on the sea floor.

Total E&P UK executed this exercise on behalf of Oil & Gas UK, a representative organisation for the UK offshore oil and gas

industry, and ran from 16 to 26 July 2011 at a site in Block 206/4 off Shetland.

This exercise site was prepared by deploying a specially-built landing base to the seafloor at a depth of 300m to accurately simulate a subsea well.

Oil & Gas UK chief executive Malcolm Webb said that the UK oil and gas industry has a very high level of confidence in its ability to prevent blowouts.

"We haven't experienced one here in over 20 years - in which time over 7,000 wells have been drilled," Webb said.

OSPRAG said it has undertaken several initiatives to improve well engineering and oil spill response capability, including the development of a well capping device for use in UK waters to seal-off an uncontrolled subsea oil well in the unlikely event of a major well control incident.

UK: OSPRAG UKCS CAPPING DEVICE COMPLETED

The construction, factory testing and systems integration of the Oil Spill Preparedness Response Advisory Group (OSPRAG) well capping device, funded by UKCS industry operators through Oil Spill Response Limited, was completed during the month of August 2011. The system will be showcasing at the Offshore Technology Europe Exhibition in Aberdeen during September and following this, the unit will be moved to the manufacturers (Cameron) facility in Aberdeen for future storage and held in readiness with routine maintenance programmes. Oil Spill Response Limited are the responsible party for the mobilisation and deployment of the unit to the dockside after which the offshore operator takes control and responsibility for the deployment and use offshore.

For further information contact Oil Spill Response Limited at +44(0)2380331551.



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UK: UKSPILL BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE NEWLY FORMED OIL SPILL RESPONSE FORUM

The Oil Spill Response Forum is a permanent legacy group, following the final report by OSPRAG.

The UK Spill Association with its Scheme for Accrediting Responders, will contribute to the ability to provide escalation of qualified and experienced human resources in response to a major offshore incident. This final report involved the active participation of many UKSpill members, including Oil Spill Response Ltd (OSR), Briggs Marine Services Ltd., Vikoma International Ltd., and BMT Argoss Ltd, underlining the role of the UK Spill Industry in supporting oil and gas activities on the UK Continental Shelf both now and in the future.

UK: PRESS RELEASE FROM OIL AND GAS UK, 21 SEPTEMBER 2011

The work of the ground-breaking Oil Spill Prevention and Response Advisory Group (OSPRAG) concludes with the launch of its final report at a one-day conference in Aberdeen today (21 September).

A total of 250 delegates are expected to attend the OSPRAG Summit on oil spill prevention and response in the UK to hear from speakers who were directly involved in the group's activities. The event is sponsored by Apache North Sea Limited and supported by BP Plc and Endeavour Energy UK Limited.

OSPRAG was set up in May 2010 following the Gulf of Mexico oil spill. The group's focus was to review and further strengthen the industry's capability to prevent a major well control incident in the UK continental shelf and respond swiftly in the unlikely event that this should occur. It should be noted that over 7,000 wells have been drilled successfully in the UK in the past 20 years, without a major well control incident.

James L. House, OSPRAG chairman and regional vice president and managing director of Apache North Sea Ltd, said: "OSPRAG was established a month after the tragic events on the Macondo field. It secured an unprecedented level of collaboration across the UK offshore oil and gas industry, its regulators and the trade unions who have achieved much in the last 16 months to strengthen the UK's preparedness for such an event. This is documented in the final report being launched today.

"OSPRAG's review of the UK's oil spill prevention and response practices and

procedures is believed to be the largest and most thorough ever conducted by the industry globally. The study gave rise to a high degree of confidence in the UK regulatory regime, and reassurance that it drives the right health, safety and environmental behaviours. Where improvement could be made, OSPRAG developed targeted recommendations which the industry has collectively taken forward, dedicating significant resource voluntarily, both in terms of personal expertise and financial support."

The importance of sharing good practice in helping to prevent a major well control incident is reflected in the creation, on OSPRAG's recommendation, of the Well Life Cycle Practices Forum. This permanent new forum has been set up under the governance of Oil & Gas UK and comprises companies responsible for the design, construction and management of wells and intervention operations.

OSPRAG also recommended gearing up the UK's oil spill response 'toolkit' to ensure that in the event of a potentially high impact but low probability incident (such as in the Gulf of Mexico), the UK would have sufficient equipment, materials and people with the necessary skills to deal with response and clean-up operations.

A full-scale test of the UK national contingency plan for responding to a major oil spill, including a demonstration of emergency response equipment, was successfully mounted in May this year and, again on OSPRAG's recommendation, another new forum, the Oil Spill Response Forum, has been established by Oil & Gas UK.

Oil & Gas UK's chief executive, Malcolm

Webb, said: "The two new pan-industry forums that have been created to provide expertise in the specialist areas of well life cycle practices and oil spill response will be important vehicles for completing the implementation of OSPRAG's recommendations and, as permanent groups under the governance of Oil & Gas UK, will ensure the industry continues on the path of improvement long after OSPRAG's disbandment."

A visible outcome of the Group's work is the OSPRAG capping device, which was unveiled at the Offshore Europe exhibition and conference in Aberdeen earlier this month. This is a significant piece of equipment, designed by the industry for deployment in the unique met-ocean conditions found in the UKCS. It is being held on standby in the North East of Scotland ready for use should it be needed to swiftly seal off an uncontrolled well. An exercise which simulated the logistics of transporting such a device, loading it on to a vessel and lowering it over the side before fixing it to a specially-built simulated well on the sea floor was successfully carried out in July. The OSPRAG cap now forms a key element in the UK offshore oil and gas industry's oil spill emergency contingency plans.

Mr House concluded: "OSPRAG's achievements have without doubt been outstanding. It set the pace and the standards to be emulated by the industry elsewhere. All its members have contributed their support, commitment and sheer hard work over the past 16 months to ensure that the regime under which the UK offshore oil and gas industry operates remains robust and fit for purpose."

The final report from OSPRAG is available at www.oilandgasuk.co.uk/osprag.

NEW PUBLICATIONS: MIEUX COMBATTRE LES MARÉES NOIRES



With the Gulf of Mexico recently facing the worst oil slick in living memory, Michel Girin, formerly Director of Cedre, and Emina Mamaca set out a global overview of this scourge. What conclusions can be drawn? What solutions can be put in place to control it better?

"Never again!" was demanded forcefully by the residents of Brittany, Galicia, the Basque country and Aquitaine after the Amoco Cadiz, the Aegean Sea and the Prestige went aground.

And every time, the authorities promised that everything would be done to avoid it happening again. And yet, the Gulf of Mexico has just lived through what is perhaps the worst oil slick in living memory, without this disaster deploying irreplaceable organisation or resources.

After "Chemical pollution by shipping", Michel Girin and Emina Mamaca have put their pens together once more to produce a global overview of oil slicks, draw the principal lessons from

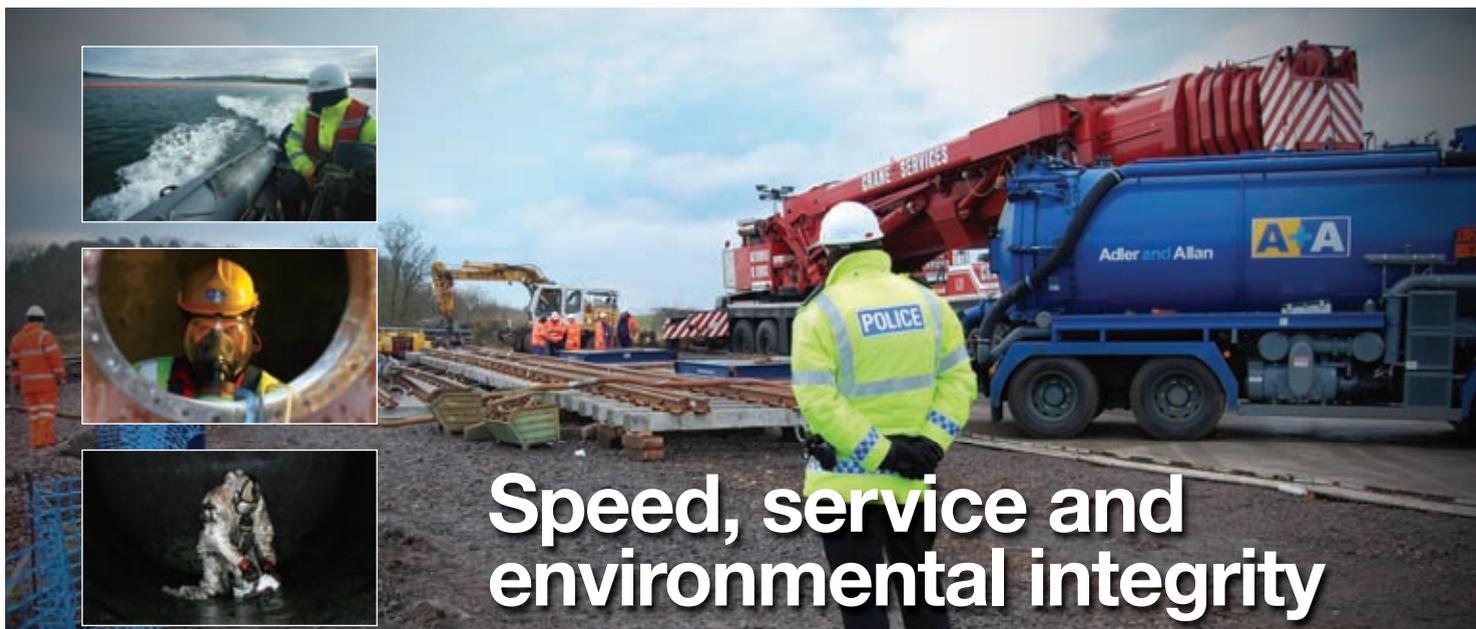
them, show what has changed in fifty years and finally propose a few additional changes likely to strengthen Man's ability to combat this scourge.

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THEME: GLOBAL COLLABORATION FOR CLEANER SEAS

The Background to Spill Awareness and Concern in India is The Frequency of Ship Accidents in Mumbai, and India, Resulting in Oil Spills and Environmental Disaster

Aug 10, 2011 M.V. RAK sank in the Arabian Sea on August 4, approximately 35 km off Mumbai's coast becoming the 23rd vessel to be involved in an accident during the past 29 years resulting in oil spill around the coast of Mumbai. In all, over 60,000 tonnes of oil has been known to have spilled by these 23 ships into the sea thus frequently ravaging the Mumbai coast and causing destruction to marine life and incalculable loss. The oil spill to hit Mumbai coast so far is half the total oil spilt around the entire Indian coast for the same period since 1982 viz. 113,000 tons as a result of 74 ship accidents.

These are the statistics made available by the Indian coast guards, the designated first response agency to combat oil spills in the ocean. It appears that Mumbai has become prone not only to terrorist attacks but also oil spills from ship accidents taking place in and around Mumbai. Yet there is no agency or system in place to prevent such incidents.

Ship collisions or grounding leading to oil spills has been a perennial occurrence. But this phenomenon appears to have got skewed in the recent past especially for Mumbai. In the past few months more than five accidents have occurred.

Mumbai must feel a sense of déjà vu as the tar balls hit its beaches again. A year ago in August, the coastline and its fragile mangrove-rich ecology were affected by an oil spill resulting from a ship collision. Not much seems to have changed, as the city weakly tackles a fresh pollution crisis created by oil that is apparently leaking from the sunken ship m.v. Rak. What emerges from the handling of the incident is the lack of progress in providing an emergency response. The designated agency under the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) is the Coast Guard. The CG has been incrementally augmenting its capacity and hardware to handle marine spill contingencies. Unfortunately, this approach is not up to the challenge at a time

when regional shipping, including oil tanker traffic, is rising sharply. Moreover, there is the problem of asymmetrical capacities of the Coast Guard and the ports, State Pollution Control Boards and oil industries. In a spill, each of these agencies has distinct responsibilities and a defined area of operation, but not all possess the infrastructure or training to respond.

Under the international contingency planning system, the response to spills is tiered and requires a minimum capability to handle an incident involving less than 700 tonnes of oil. Higher tier standards prescribe capabilities for 10,000 tonnes and more. This is the metric India's ports need to meet quickly. Given the long coastline to be covered, the central government has its task cut out. The priority should be to ensure that all national ports are capable of responding to a crisis with the necessary infrastructure and manpower. India needs to do much better in protecting itself from environmental and economic losses arising from oil spills.

**UKSPILL pavilion at
Oil Spill India, supported
by UKTI funding**

Under our ATO accreditation, UKSpill will take 5 UK companies to Oil Spill India 2011 in September, at Goa, India and has funding for 4 companies under the Tradeshow Access

Programme (TAP) scheme approved to support British exporters. The UK pavilion will be a focus for the 6 companies participating.

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Visit www.interspill.com for up-to-date news and information about Interspill 2012.

Spill International will provide a daily newspaper at Interspill 2012 in London.



During Interspill 2012 in London, Spill International will keep delegates, visitors and exhibitors updated on news from the trade show and the conference via a daily newspaper. Reporters will roam the exhibit floor to gather the news companies and professionals want to share during this high profile event. In the meantime keep us updated with your press releases for inclusion in the weekly newsletter and send them to our news editor via pressreleases@geomares.nl to

let the world know the advances your company is making. Do it now and be prepared for Interspill!

Spill International (www.spill-international.com), the international website and newsletter on the prevention, preparedness for, response to and restoration of marine spills and pollution, provides experts from all over the world with information on recent events, developments in the industry and significant research projects on a daily (website) and a weekly basis (newsletter). It provides a timely forum for discussion regarding innovations and best practices across the spectrum and it includes a directory of companies working in the

business through its Directory section.

Started in November 2010, Spill International is an initiative of Geomares Publishing, a publishing company with more than 25 years of experience in business-to-business publications for specialist groups in earth observation, geomatics, hydrography and oceanography. Thousands and thousands of readers have already found their way to the website and subscribed to the weekly newsletter of Spill International.

If you want to receive this weekly update on the spill business as well, visit www.ukspill.org/spillinternational and fill in the form.

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In the News

UK: Earth-Rite TELLUS® II – Intrinsically Safe Hazardous Area Static Earthing System

The newly upgraded Earth-Rite TELLUS II from Newson Gale offers effective static earth verification for drums, IBCs and other mobile equipment in hazardous area operations. The lightweight static dissipative polyester (SDP) enclosure can be mounted in all industrial flammable or combustible atmospheres and provides the operator with a reassuring bright green flashing LED to confirm a positive connection to earth, as well as a pair of output contacts for interlock with pumps, valves or other control or alarm devices.

The Earth-Rite® TELLUS constantly monitors hazardous area processing operations involving the handling, transporting or mixing of flammable or combustible products, whether they be powders or liquids. Operating in real time, the system confirms that a positive connection to earth exists and, most importantly, remains intact for the

duration of the operation. As long as the resistance of the connection to a designated earth exists and remains below 10 ohms a bright green pulsing LED display inside the hazardous area assures the operator of safe conditions, preventing dangerous static electricity accumulation on the monitored object.

The Earth-Rite TELLUS Static Earthing System consists of a power supply unit and controller which is mounted in a safe area as much as 500 metres / 1,600 feet from the hazardous area and, within the hazardous area, the intrinsically safe earth-connection status-indicator with a two-pole earthing clamp on retractable connection cables in various length options. Both the PSU/Controller and Indicator/Junction Box are waterproof and dust-tight (IP66 / Nema 4X). Alternative connections, such as plugs and

sockets, are also available. The system operates on 110V – 230V AC (user selectable) 50/60Hz supply, with certified Intrinsically Safe (I.S.) monitoring circuit output for connection in the hazardous area.

For over 25 years, Newson Gale has been supplying the chemical and processing industries worldwide with its market leading range of static control products to help ensure people, plant and processes are protected from static caused fires and explosions. The Earth-Rite TELLUS forms just part of the range of static earthing and bonding equipment available from the Nottingham UK based company. To learn more about the Earth-Rite TELLUS or to access general information on controlling static electricity in hazardous areas visit www.newson-gale.com or call/email Newson Gale on +44 115 940 7500 or groundit@newson-gale.co.uk

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THE RAW REPORT

Spill Response Contractors – WHO'S LIABLE?

During the current economic downturn there is constant pressure on spill response contractors to reduce margins.

The potential liabilities associated with spill response and the associated clean-up, in relation to human health and environmental impacts, are considerable and therefore it is essential that all projects are undertaken appropriately.

RAW has recently come across several cases where contractors have not adequately addressed liabilities associated

with spill claims leaving the potential for future claims, including for ill health, to arise against those involved in the clean-up works. Such cases are possibly a result of the pressure on contractors to reduce the cost of dealing with spill incidents. In the event of a future claim, from inadequate works, the contractor may themselves face a claim, and they may not have adequate liability or Professional Indemnity insurance cover. If the contractor is not covered and has insufficient assets then the Loss Adjuster or claims handler could be held liable for not appointing an appropriate contractor.

Consequently it is essential that the contractor appointed has the following:

- Demonstrable suitable experience and qualified staff;
- Professional Indemnity insurance at the right level;
- Control of historical, gradual pollution cover;
- Public and third party liability cover; and;
- The ability to continue trading and pay insurance premiums.



Standard public liability and professional indemnity policies generally offer no protection against gradual pollution claims, and may even exclude 'sudden and accidental' pollution. It is important to ensure that the contractor carries errors and omissions insurance that covers claims of a gradual nature from a historical source, for instance where pollution may not be identified until some months, or years, later.

In addition, the definition of "damage" in the contractor's insurance policy should include loss of use of property that is not physically damaged, diminishment in its value, or biodiversity damage caused by pollution. Many policies will limit themselves to physical damage only.

It should also be noted that unless the original contractor continues to trade, and maintains an adequate level of insurance, there may be no cover for events identified in the future that relate to the original incident.

A suitable policy would cover all remediation costs arising from pollution, whereas standard Liability Policies often exclude statutory costs for example where the Environment Agency has required remedial works to be undertaken – for example in the Bartoline v Royal Sun Alliance case. In this case Bartoline were unable to claim for clean-up costs incurred by the Environment Agency, amounting to more than £600,000, under its public liability policy due to the wording of the policy, and the case highlights the assumptions that are commonly made regarding policy cover for environmental issues. A contractor, who may be responsible for cleaning up a large number of pollution incidents each year, must carry suitable and sufficient insurance cover to ensure that any subsequent claims are covered in case mistakes are made or liabilities inadequately resolved.

The Financial Services Authority (FSA) regulates Primary and Appointed

Representatives within the insurance industry, but the regulation of contractors falls into a grey area. The FSA can fine a Primary Representative if they do not take appropriate care when choosing and vetting contractors, but this may only occur after the event of a complaint or a claim – there is no formal procedure in the industry for selection and vetting of spill clean-up contractors. This demonstrates the importance of selecting the right contractor and Loss Adjusters, insurers and other stakeholders need to be certain where the liability for decisions would lie in the event of a claim and be sure that their contractors have appropriate insurance cover. Otherwise, in the event of a claim, it may not just be the contractor who could be affected by a claim but also their appointees.

The RAW report written by:
Author : Dr. Jon Burton
BSc PhD FGS MCIWEM CSci
Technical Director, RAW



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The last word

How often do we say that there is joy in getting the last word...

This issue of SpillAlert is focussed on Response and Responders, which proved to be a sprawling subject covering everything, in an environment where sensitivity over oil spills is still high after the Macondo incident last year.

Shell has had a spill in the North Sea as this is being written, and the media, the BBC in this case, were asking questions such as: How does it compare with the Gulf of Mexico, what environmental effect might it have, and can we believe what anyone says?

An important question is whether we are better at Response and as Responders now compared to the past. Admiral Michael Stacey, now almost retired, has seen the spill industry develop from Torrey Canyon days.

to respond to a spill, which however small and infrequent could have far-reaching effects on your industry and on the national environment. Over the years there have of course been changes, but not as many as one might have thought. Booms and sea recovery systems have improved as has the understanding of dispersants, but at sea clean-up remains an imprecise and very weather-limited operation whilst shore-line clean-up is ever laborious and labour intensive.

Perhaps it is in the world of communications and information exchange where most has happened – when I started there were no mobile telephones and virtually no computers. But remember that there are two components to good communications – one is to have suitable equipment and the other is to have

the will to use it – we are not always good at the latter.

The most interesting, and most important, area is where there has not been much change. Plans are still only as good as their latest exercise and equipment is only as efficient as its maintenance and its operators. Also, as in other walks of life it is who you know, both at home and abroad that is important, always have time for the media and for related environmental agencies and never ever neglect the essential relationships between your industry and your government.

Effective response ever remains a team effort involving all – from top to bottom.

Michael Stacey, Rear Admiral, Surrey, August 2011

“The Musings of an Ancient Mariner - When I retired from the Navy in 1979 after 37 years service, little did I think I would find such a rewarding and enjoyable second career in oil spill response... Of course there was a lot to learn but to a naval man there was nothing too new in the need for well practiced contingency plans and for trained equipment operators

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Details at www.cleanpacific.org

INDIA: OIL SPILL INDIA 2011

29 SEPTEMBER – 1 OCTOBER 2011, GOA, INDIA

Details at www.oilspillindia.org

UK: ARCTIC OIL SPILL 2011

4-5 OCTOBER 2011, LONDON, UK

Details at www.informaglobalevents.com/event/arcticoilspill

ISTANBUL: EUROSPILL SEMINAR

14-15 NOVEMBER 2011, ISTANBUL, TURKEY

Details at www.eurospill.eu

UKSPILL ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER

10 JANUARY 2012, WATERMANS HALL, LONDON

Details at www.ukspill.org

UK: INTERSPILL 2012

13-15 MARCH 2012, LONDON, UK

Details at www.interspill.com

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